

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Original) Method for preparing a wet strength agent comprising a first step of reacting a nitrogen-containing polymer with a hydrophobic compound to form hydrophobic side-chain substituents on the polymer, a second step of reacting the hydrophobised nitrogen-containing polymer obtained with a crosslinker to form a cationic nitrogen-containing resin, and a third step comprising forming of particles by emulsion polymerisation of one or more ethylenically unsaturated monomers in the presence of the wet strength resin formed.

2. (Original) Method according to claim 1 wherein the nitrogen-containing polymer is a polyamine or a polyaminoamide.

3. (Presently Amended) Method according to claim 1-2, wherein the first step is a vinylog addition or alkylation where the hydrophobic compound is selected from **the group consisting of** alkyl(meth)acrylates, alkyl(meth)acrylamides, alkyl sulphonates, alkyl sulphates, diazo compounds, ethers, ~~or~~ epoxides **and** mixtures thereof.

4. (Original) Method according to claim 1 wherein the hydrophobic compounds comprise a hydrophobic chain having 6-40 carbon atoms.

5. (Original) Method according to claim 1 wherein the hydrophobic compounds comprise a hydrophobic chain having 8-40 carbon atoms.

6. (Original) Method according to claim 1 wherein the hydrophobic compound contains a chain of atoms containing at least one hetero atom.

7. (Original) Method according to claim 1 wherein the crosslinker is epichlorohydrin.

8. (Original) Method according to claim 1 wherein the monomers are selected from styrene, butadiene, alkyl (meth)acrylates, alkyl(meth)amides, (meth)acrylonitrile, vinyl acetate, or vinyl amide, or mixtures or derivatives thereof.

9. (Original) Method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the hydrophobic compound

is a saturated compound, or an unsaturated compound, resulting in a nitrogen-containing polymer having saturated side-chain substituents.

10. (Original) Paper wet strength agent obtainable by a method as defined in claim 9.

11. (Original) Paper wet strength agent comprising a wet strength resin comprising cationic nitrogen-containing polymers having hydrophobic saturated side-chain substituents and groups derived from a crosslinker; and polymeric particles.

12. (Original) Paper wet strength agent according to claim 11 wherein the hydrophobic side-chain substituents contain a hydrophobic group attached to a nitrogen atom of the nitrogen-containing polymer via a chain of atoms comprising 6-40 carbon atoms.

13. (Presently Amended) Paper wet strength agent according to claim 11-~~12~~, wherein the hydrophobic side-chain substituents are selected from the group consisting of derivatives of alkyl(meth)acrylates, alkyl(meth)acrylamides, alkyl sulphonates, alkyl sulphates, diazo compounds, ethers, ~~or~~epoxides and mixtures thereof.

14. (Original) Method for preparing a wet strength resin comprising a first step of reacting a nitrogen-containing polymer with a hydrophobic compound to form hydrophobic side-chain substituents, in which said hydrophobic compound is selected from alkyl(meth)acrylates, alkyl(meth)acrylamides, alkyl sulphonates, alkyl sulphates, diazo compounds, ethers, or epoxides or mixtures thereof, and a second step of reacting the hydrophobised nitrogen-containing polymer obtained with a crosslinker to form a cationic nitrogen-containing resin.

15. (Original) Method according to claim 14 wherein the hydrophobic compound contains 6-40 carbon atoms.

16. (Original) Method as claimed in claim 14, wherein the hydrophobic compound is a saturated compound, or an unsaturated compound, resulting in a nitrogen-containing polymer having saturated side-chain substituents.

17. (Presently Amended) Paper wet strength resin obtainable by a method as

defined in claim 14-~~15~~.

18. (Presently Amended) Paper wet strength resin comprising cationic nitrogen-containing polymers having saturated hydrophobic side-chain substituents selected from the group consisting of compounds derived from **the group consisting of** alkyl(meth)acrylates, alkyl(meth)acrylamides, alkyl sulphonates, alkyl sulphates, diazo compounds, ethers, ~~or~~ epoxides and mixtures thereof; and groups derived from a crosslinker.

19-27. Cancelled